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Postal Regulatory Commission
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June 28, 2021

Mr. Michael M. Kubayanda, Chairman
Postal Regulatory Commission
901 New York Avenue, N.W., Suite 200
Washington, DC 20268

Re: Docket No. R2021-2

Chairman Kubayanda:

On behalf of DAV (Disabled American Veterans) and our more than one million members, we write to express our opposition to the proposed postal rate increase (Docket No. R2021-2) which would have a significant negative impact on DAV and the veterans we support.

DAV is a congressionally chartered national veterans' service organization (VSO) whose members were all injured or made ill while serving on behalf of this nation. We operate as a nonprofit charity dedicated to providing a lifetime of support for veterans of all generations and their families. Although DAV has revolutionized our communications over the past decade, most of our members and financial supporters have indicated their preference for interacting and contributing to us through traditional mail. As such, major postal rate increases directly impact our resources and thus our ability to provide free services to more than a million veterans each year; services that would otherwise not be available to them.

For example, DAV provides free representation to more than 1.1 million veterans in their claims for benefits from VA and last year took over 1.9 million actions to advocate for veterans and their families, such as representing claimants in hearings and appeals for benefits, reviewing and developing records, providing professional advice and responding to inquiries, and establishing new claims for earned benefits. Last year, we interviewed almost 250,000 veterans and their families, and filed almost 140,000 new claims for veterans' benefits.

Since 2014, DAV has co-hosted more than 700 traditional and virtual job fairs, connecting over 240,000 active-duty, Guard and Reserve members, veterans and their spouses with employment, resulting in more than 150,000 job offers. Our Voluntary Services program provides free transportation to and from VA facilities for veterans who otherwise might not be able to obtain needed VA health care services. In a typical year, DAV provides more than 625,000 no-cost rides for ill and injured veterans to VA medical facilities.

Last year, DAV donated over \$900,000 to more than 1,200 veterans affected by natural disasters, including hurricanes, tornados, floods and fires across the country. DAV also established a COVID-19 Unemployment Relief Fund to support disabled veterans who lost employment or income in the wake of the virus outbreak and has since distributed more than \$2 million to veterans in need.

We recognize the need of the Postal Service to make adjustments so that it can continue to efficiently and effectively provide services based on the new realities it faces, but I ask that you carefully consider the immediate impact the type of rate increase you are proposing will have on the ability of DAV and other VSOs to continue providing urgently needed services to millions of disabled veterans, their families and survivors. If the proposed postal rate increase is implemented, DAV would be forced to take millions of dollars out of program services funds to cover increased postage costs and lost revenue. I urge you to take a more prudent approach that provides reasonable and predictable rate increases while continuing to explore ways to streamline your internal operations.

For all the above reasons, we implore you and your colleagues to reject the proposed postal rate increase currently proposed in Docket No. R2021-2.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Edward R. Reese, Jr." in a cursive script.

Edward R. Reese, Jr.
Executive Director
Washington Headquarters